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**REMARKS**

Claims 1 - 20 are pending in the present application. Claim 20 is newly added.

In section 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 5 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In response, Applicants amended claims 5 and 16 to provide a definite limit for the range recited therein. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the section 112 rejection are respectfully requested.

In section 6 of the Office Action, claims 1 - 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,436,723 to Kunselman et al. (hereinafter "the Kunselman et al. patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,343,289 to Crawford et al. (hereinafter "the Crawford et al. patent").

Of the rejected claims, claims 1 and 9 are independent. With regard to claim 1, Applicants clarified a recital of a feature that is neither described nor suggested by the references. With regard to claim 9, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 1 provides for an optical device that includes, in relevant part, a support element having a surface with a shape corresponding to a focal surface, the surface of the support element being located on the focal surface. An exemplary embodiment of such an optical device is shown in Fig. 3. The optical device includes a support element 55 having a surface 60 that corresponds to the shape of a focal surface 25. Another exemplary embodiment of such an optical device is shown in Fig. 5.

In the Office Action, the Examiner recognizes that the Kunselman et al. patent fails to teach a support element having a shape corresponding to the focal surface, and thus, suggests that in the Crawford et al. patent, structure 24 is descriptive of such a support element. However, Applicants have not found any teaching in the Crawford et al. patent of a relationship between a shape of a surface of structure 24 and a focal surface. Furthermore, with reference to Figs. 2 and 6 of the Crawford et al. patent, it can be seen that detectors 22 are not directly mounted on

structure 24. If detectors 22 are at a focal surface, then structure 24, and more particularly the surface of structure 24, cannot also be at the focal surface.

Whereas the Crawford et al. patent does not describe (i) a relationship between a shape of a surface of structure 24 and a focal surface, and (ii) a surface of structure 24 being at a focal surface, Applicants submit that the Crawford et al. patent does not describe or suggest (a) a support element having a surface with a shape corresponding to a focal surface, and (b) the surface of the support element being located on the focal surface, as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over the Kunselman et al. and Crawford et al. patents, whether considered alone or in combination.

Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and further recites that the sensor array comprises a photosensitive element mounted on a flexible structure. Applicants have not found any teaching in either of the Kunselman et al. or Crawford et al. patents of a sensor array on a **flexible structure**, as recited in claim 2. Thus, claim 2 is patentably distinguishable over the references on its own merits.

Claims 3 - 5 depend from claim 2, and claims 6 - 8 depend from claim 1. Thus, claims 3 - 5 are patentable over the Kunselman et al. and Crawford et al. patents for at least the same reasons as claim 2, and claims 6 - 8 are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 9 provides for an optical device that includes, in relevant part, a flexible sensor. Applicants note that the Examiner did not provide a specific citation to a description of a flexible sensor, and Applicants have not found any description or suggestion in either of the Kunselman et al. or Crawford et al. patents of a flexible sensor. As such, even if the teachings of the Kunselman et al. and Crawford et al. patents were somehow combined, as attempted by the Examiner, the resulting combination would still be deficient in teaching or suggesting the claimed subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 9 and its dependent claims 10 - 19 are patentable over the Kunselman et al. and Crawford et al. patents.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the section 103(a) rejection of claims 1 – 19 are respectfully solicited.

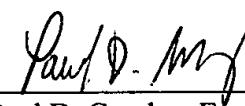
Applicants amended claim 1 to clarify a feature that is neither described nor suggested by the art of record. Applicants amended claims 2 - 5 and 14 - 16 for purposes of form. The amendments are not intended to narrow the meaning of any term of the claims, and as such, Applicants submit that the doctrine of equivalents should be available for all of the elements of all of the claims.

Applicants added claim 20 to even further provide the claim coverage that Applicants appear to deserve based on the prior art that was cited by the Examiner. A favorable consideration that also results in the allowance of claim 20 is earnestly solicited.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims presented in this application patentably distinguish over the prior art. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and that this application be passed to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

  
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VERSION MARKED TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims below to read as indicated herein.

1. (Amended) An optical device comprising:

an imaging device for imaging an incident beam onto a focal surface;  
a support element ~~comprising at least one side having a shape~~ having a surface with a shape corresponding to said focal surface, said ~~side~~ surface of said support element being located on said focal surface; and  
a sensor array in close contact with said ~~one side~~ surface of said support element.

2. (Amended) The optical device of claim 1, wherein said sensor array comprises ~~at least one~~ a photosensitive element mounted on a flexible structure.

3. (Amended) The optical device of claim 2, wherein said flexible structure conforms to said shape of said ~~one side~~ surface of said support element.

4. (Amended) The optical device of claim 2, wherein said flexible structure is bonded to said ~~one side~~ surface of said support element.

5. (Amended) The optical device of claim 2, wherein said flexible structure has a thickness which ranges in a range from ~~about~~ 1 micrometer to ~~about~~ 0.1 millimeters.

14. (Amended) The optical device of claim 9, further comprising a support element wherein said at least ~~one~~ a portion of said flexible sensor array is fixed to said support element and said support element forms said flexible sensor array to said shape of said focal surface.

15. (Amended) The optical device of claim 9, wherein said flexible sensor array comprises ~~at least one~~ a photosensitive element mounted on a flexible structure.

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16. (Amended) The optical device of claim 15, wherein said flexible structure has a thickness ~~which ranges in a range from about 1 micrometer to about 0.1 millimeters.~~